



EASY LIKE SUNDAY

A CRAFT BREAKFAST RESTAURANT

WRITTEN BY TEDDY DURGIN | IMAGES BY ASHLI MIX PHOTOGRAPHY

In this the second in our new series of articles on funny or quirky-named bars, restaurants, pubs and taverns in and around Maryland and Washington, D.C., we picked Baltimore's Easy Like Sunday for two reasons. One, this article's author loves his drinks in the morning with breakfast or brunch. Two, this article's author loves the Commodores and Lionel Richie.

"Easy Like Sunday Morning" was one of the smoothest R&B ballads of the 1970s. Written by Richie, the song expresses a man's relief as a relationship comes to an end. Instead of being sad and depressed about the break-up, he asserts throughout that he is instead "easy . . . easy like Sunday morning."

It's a strange inspiration for naming a restaurant. But as co-owner Antonios Kokolis relates the story, the tune wasn't necessarily the reason for the name. He notes that his partners, Sean and Anna MacCuish, started the first Easy Like Sunday in Charlotte, N.C. They sold that business about two and a half years ago because they sensed greater

**Antonios Kokolis,
Anna & Sean MacCuish
owners and operators**
Easy Like Sunday

opportunity in Maryland.

That's when Kokolis got involved. "We all brought the Easy Like Sunday concept to Baltimore," he recalled during a recent interview with the Beverage Journal. "We can always say the name comes from the song. That's the easy answer. But it's not. The idea was to name it something simple. Sean and Anna asked themselves, 'When do people go out to brunch the most?' They noodled it through and brainstormed "Sunday . . . Sunday morning . . . Sunday is easy . . . Eggs can be over easy . . . Easy Like Sunday!"

He continued, "Of course, the staff – if they don't want to explain that long answer – will just say, 'Oh, it's from the song!' The funny thing is people will call to see if we're open or they'll write reviews, and the reviews will inevitably say, 'Easy Like Sunday Morning is



a great place to eat and drink!' It's not a bad thing to be associated with. We actually have the song playing twice each day on our play list. You'll hear it at both locations. I mean, we can't NOT play it!"

Easy Like Sunday does indeed have two Baltimore-area locations. The first is at Lo-

cust Point and the second is at The Village of Cross Keys development in north Baltimore. According to Kokolis, "We are growing the business at Locust Point. It's getting better and better every day. Cross Keys continues to be our star, though. And we do want to add a third Easy Like Sunday to the Baltimore



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area or one of the surrounding areas. We're looking at Columbia and Bethesda. We often walk into places and say to each other, 'Oh an Easy Like Sunday would do SO well here!'"

Easy Like Sunday is, for sure, a craft breakfast restaurant. It features a fairly straight-forward menu that is simplified enough so that everyone can find something and not get overwhelmed. "You go to some restaurants," Kokolis noted, "and you just feel overwhelmed by the menu. Here, we just want to be your cool place to come eat brunch and also have some great craft cocktails."

Easy Like Sunday serves up more than 15 craft cocktails. There is also a drink specials board. Kokolis stated, "Our most popular is probably The Wallflower, which is a tequila-based drink. People love that we put a live orchid on top. Everything here is about what tastes good, but also what looks good. If a drink is 'cute,' women customers are going to order it. Another big favorite is our Sunday Love, which is a lemon vodka drink. Our male customers love our Maple Fashioned. It's like an Old Fashioned, but we've added some maple syrup and orange bitters to it. It pops! We also have lavender rose ice molds, and we put edible glitter inside and it makes for a beautiful drink."

Kokolis and the MacCuishes (neither were available for this interview as Anna had recently given birth to the couple's third child) do a very deep dive whenever they hire bartenders. According to Kokolis, "We always tell them to think of Easy Like Sunday 'as your canvass. You're an artist!' We do try to get every drink out within three minutes during non-peak hours and five minutes during peak times. But we make sure they don't skimp on anything. The important thing is to have every cocktail taste the same every time a customer orders it, whether they are at Locust Point or Cross Keys."

So, what has been the key to success for Kokolis after migrating to Maryland from two states south? "I love people, from our staff to the people who we meet and serve. We meet all different types, and there's no better feeling than walking into either place and seeing what Sean,

Anna, and I have created. It just makes us feel good. All three of us are very artsy and creative. We wanted to create a business where we could put our own touch on things, and that's exactly what we have done. You can walk into either location and see something from each one of us."

He adds, "It's so important for us to keep everything consistent, too, because we do have two locations. And we have great assistance from our employees. Most of our staff has been with us for two years, really since we opened. So, having consistent staff is important. We take so much pride in Saturdays and Sundays, because those are our busiest days. Unfortunately, during the week, a brunch restaurant is slower because so many customers are working or are at school. Sunday is especially busy. Everyone likes to say that 'Sunday is the easiest day of the week.' Not for us! But it is certainly the most rewarding."

As for advice Kokolis would give to anyone reading this who dreams of opening his/her own place someday, he was quick to answer: "Keep going! Work hard towards your goal. Sean, Anna, and I have worked in all aspects of the industry. We've worked in the kitchen, we've worked in the front of the house. We've tended

bar, we've been servers. I think the biggest thing we've learned over the years is the importance of building relationships and connections. You never know who you are going to meet along the way who will eventually help you and help make the dream come true." ■



Dierra Railey
Bartender
Easy Like Sunday